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Oil taken from Duane site

By JOHN MacKENNA
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PERTH AMBOY — The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has removed some underground deposits of oil from the former Duane Marine Salvage Co. property on Washington Street.

John R. Ulshoefer, coordinator of the agency's clean-up effort at Duane Marine, said a contractor this week removed some oil-tainted soil near the tide line of the waterfront property.

Duane Marine was a toxic waste disposal facility until it was des-

troyed by fire in 1980.

The EPA took a new interest in the site earlier this month after some oil was seen floating in the Arthur Kill near the Duane Marine property.

Ulshoefer said an investigation showed that small quantities of oil were leaking from the ground on the property.

Three samples of the oil have been tested, with one showing 14 parts per million of polychlorinated biphenyls (PCB's), and the other two showing no traces of the hazardous chemicals, he said.

Ulshoefer said the agency has hired a contractor, O.H. Materials, of Findlay, Ohio, to excavate some parts of the site to determine the source of the oil.

The excavation revealed small deposits of oily soil about 10 feet underground, the official said.

The oil is believed to contain no significant amounts of PCB's or other hazardous chemicals, according to Ulshoefer.

He said the oil-soaked soil, which was mixed with crushed metal that may have been oil drums, was

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DUANE: Oil removed

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removed. The excavated areas were refilled with clean soil, he added.

Ulshoefer said the oil may have been contained in fill which was used to build up the waterfront property, or it may have soaked into the ground from a tank on the tract.

In a related matter, the EPA has hired a contractor to secure the site.

The Duane Marine tract was fenced in and boarded up after the 1980 fire, but parts of the fence and many of the boards have been removed, leaving the site accessible to passers-by.

A contractor has already boarded up some windows in the old Duane Marine building, and the fence probably will be secured later this week, Ulshoefer said.

The state Department of Environmental Protection is planning a full-scale clean-up of the site later this year, according to Dr. Jorge Berkowitz, administrator of the department's Hazardous Site Mitigation Administration.

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